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1970/05/02

Department of State TELEGRAM

TOP SECRET

PP RUEHC RUEHCR
RUEHCR 704 1221010
ZNY TTTTT ZZH
P 020930Z MAY 70
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 642
RUEHCR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON 332
BT
T O P S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 704

INCN: 3 4 5Q
MAY 2, 1970
6:45 A.M.

NODIS/KHMER

CHARGE CALLED IN MAY 2 BY ACTING CHIEF OF STAFF, MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, GENERAL SRAY SAMAN, AND GENERAL U SAY. FOLLOWING EMERGED:

1. GOC DELIGHTED WITH ARRIVAL KHMER KROM TROOPS. ACCORDING GENERALS, KHMER KROM UNINFORMED AS TO WHERE THEY WERE GOING AND AT FIRST WERE SOMEWHAT SURPRISED TO FIND THEMSELVES IN PHNOM PENH. HOWEVER, ARE PLEASED TO BE HERE. 21 VIETNAMESE WERE FOUND AMONGST KHMER KROM AND RETURNED IN SAME PLANES WITH WHICH TROOPS TRANSPORTED. THIS DONE, ACCORDING GENERAL SRAY SAMAN, IN ORDER AVOID ANY POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT OR FRICTION.

2. QUESTION AGAIN POSED AS TO PAYMENT OF KHMER KROM TROOPS. IF CAMBODIANS ARE TO UNDERTAKE THIS, THEY WOULD LIKE TO BE INFORMED REGARDING PAY SCALES. THEY WERE UNINFORMED OF INFORMATION CONTAINED STATE 066620 (NUMBERED PARA 2) WHICH INDICATED THAT KHMER KROM UNITS WOULD RETAIN THEIR STATUS IN VIETNAMESE ARMED FORCES.
(COMMENT: WE HAVE SINCE RECEIVED SAIGON 6689 WHICH CLARIFIES THIS BUT NOT IF USG WILL CONTINUE SALARY PAYMENTS, WHICH OF COURSE WOULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE ASSISTANCE TO GOC).

3. GENERALS THEN TURNED TO THREE PRESSING NEEDS: A. UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT, B. LIGHT WEAPONS, MORTARS, MACHINE GUNS, ETC. AND, C. AVIATION INCLUDING HELICOPTERS AND FIGHTER PLANES.

IN REPLY, CHARGE STATED HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE OF USG SUPPLYING NEW AIRCRAFT. AS CONCERNS WEAPONS, THESE WERE ARRIVING AND WOULD CONTINUE TO ARRIVE INCLUDING MORTARS AND MACHINE GUNS EVENTUALLY. RE UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT, CHARGE STATED WOULD REPEAT REQUEST ALREADY MADE.

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COMMENT: IF POSSIBLE I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE TO GOC IF FATIGUES, SHOES, PACKS AND THE LIKE COULD BE SUPPLIED FOR REASONABLE AMOUNT OF MEN, NOT FOR ENTIRE 200,000 MENTIONED BY GENERALS. AS CONCERNS AVIATION I WOULD LIKE TO URGE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION FOR PROPOSAL BEING PUT FORTH BY DATT THAT WE SHOULD ATTEMPT REPLACE SOME PRESENT CAMBODIAN AIRCRAFT SUCH AS T-28S AND A-1S WHICH WERE FORMERLY GIVEN CAMBODIA BUT WHICH ARE NO LONGER IN CONDITION TO FLY. THIS COULD BE DONE BY FLYING IN REPLACEMENT AIRCRAFT AND TAKING OUT THE OLD IN SAME AIRCRAFT. THIS IN MY VIEW WOULD NOT BE CONTRADICTORY TO THE PRESIDENT'S STATED INTENT TO LIMIT US AID TO LIGHT WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT. WE WOULD BE ADDING NOTHING NEW BUT MAINLY REPLACING EQUIPMENT ALREADY GIVEN BY USG.

RIVES

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